



# GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

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## **DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AWARDED \$1.5 MILLION CONTRACT FOR UNDERAGE TOBACCO ENFORCEMENT**

ATLANTA—The Georgia Department of Revenue has been awarded a \$1.5 million contract by the Food and Drug Administration for underage tobacco enforcement, Commissioner Doug MacGinnitie announced today.

“The Department has always taken its responsibility to enforce the state’s underage tobacco laws very seriously,” Commissioner MacGinnitie said. “This three-year contract award augments the tremendous work already being done in Georgia concerning underage tobacco enforcement and tobacco enforcement in general.”

DOR’s underage tobacco enforcement is conducted in partnership with the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD). The effort is part of the federal Synar Amendment which requires that states maintain a retailer violation rate of less than 20 percent in order to avoid potential cuts in block grant funding to Georgia each year.

“Our Alcohol and Tobacco Division diligently monitors retailers and stresses the importance of identification checks to prevent sales of tobacco products to minors,” Commissioner MacGinnitie added. “Georgia has been, and continues to be, well under the national violation limit of 20 percent.”

DOR provides enforcement of O.C.G.A. §§ 16-12-170 through 16-12-176 which prohibits the sale, distribution to or possession of tobacco products by minors, including but not limited to issuing administrative citations, pursuing criminal prosecutions, and conducting inspections where tobacco products are sold or distributed.

According to Howard Tyler, Director of the DOR’s Alcohol and Tobacco Division, the Department conducted over 2,000 investigations and issued more than 300 citations for underage tobacco violations in calendar year 2010. Penalties for retail outlets who sell tobacco products to minors start at \$300 and become progressively severe if a retail establishment continues to sell tobacco products to minors under the age of 18.

A copy of Georgia’s Synar Report can be accessed here:

<http://dbhdd.ga.gov/portal/site/DBHDD/menuitem.ac7f2b3657e79bae05614b10d03036a0/?vgnextoid=6d757be90e0cf210VgnVCM100000bf01010aRCRD&vgnnextfmt=print>